

EXHIBIT 16

*Saving Lives and Protecting People from
Injury and Violence*

Cuyahoga County Aims to Reduce Overdose Fatalities

By: Vince Caraffi and Allisyn Leppa



Background

Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in Cuyahoga County, surpassing motor vehicle crashes, suicides, and falls. The number of deaths directly related to prescription drug abuse increased nearly 500% from 1999 to 2013. Prescription pain relievers continue to be the key factor behind this epidemic. On average, Ohio loses one person every five hours to drug overdose. In 2013, Cuyahoga County lost 340 residents to opioids.

Under the leadership of the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, the Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force has played a significant role in bringing partners together to combat this public health epidemic. By implementing a collaborative approach, the epidemic can be addressed from the critical perspectives of prevention, treatment, recovery, and education.

Purpose

The Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force was formed in 2010 as a means to increase awareness to the dangers associated with the misuse of opiates. Recognizing that addiction is a disease, the members of the Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force strive to implement strategies and policies that will have a positive impact on reducing accidental deaths from drug abuse among residents of Cuyahoga County.

By 2018, Cuyahoga County aims to reduce fatalities related to prescription drug overdose abuse by 15%. This will be accomplished through continued collaboration among partners and the development and implementation of comprehensive, multi-faceted, population-based programs and policies.

“The Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force brings together the most engaged people and organizations in our community. This provides a forum for us to share, learn, and collaborate. Through the Task Force, ROBBY’S VOICE has built a network of experts which have been critical to our efforts to serve families in need”-Rob Brandt, President, ROBBY’S VOICE

Cuyahoga County Residents

Opiate addiction knows no boundaries when it comes to socioeconomic status, age, race, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation. According to the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office, those at greatest risk of experiencing a drug overdose are males age 35-55. The strategies implemented will not only target middle aged males, but will also include young adults aged 19-25, as this age group continues to be a rapidly growing population at risk, as well as prescribers of opiates.

SUCCESS STORIES

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

The Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force will seek to implement the following high impact strategies:

Expand access to Project DAWN Education and Distribution sites

Continued physician education

Increased awareness among collegiate staff and students

Enhanced prevention education for medical students

Program in Action

Based upon a population based approach to address this public health epidemic, success is built upon a collaborative effort to increase awareness to the risk factors contributing to drug overdose and reinforce the benefits of treatment and recovery. Utilizing data obtained from the County Medical Examiner's Office, Cuyahoga County Project DAWN, and two local universities, the Task Force has been able to identify key points for education and lifesaving interventions.

Following the completion of a comprehensive needs assessment in 2014, the Task Force selected to implement the following strategies:

1. Continue to expand access to Project DAWN Education and Distribution Sites
2. Implement a comprehensive physician education curriculum that is inclusive of prevention education, screening tools, proper prescribing guidelines, and OARRS usage. In collaboration with the Cuyahoga county Board of Health, MetroHealth will host a conference dedicated to the stigma associated with addiction.
3. Assess risk factors for drug abuse among college students and continue to strive for drug abuse related policies. Baldwin Wallace University will also host a Prevention/Recovery Conference for Northeast Ohio Colleges in 2015.
4. Create a field rotation for Medical Residents at University Hospitals Case Medical Center.

Future Directions

The Cuyahoga County Opiate Task Force is fortunate to be comprised of diverse individuals and organizations who are striving towards a common goal. The success of the Task Force will largely be contingent upon the continued collaboration among its members. The Task Force meets bimonthly to share resources and further develop harm reduction strategies.

Over the past decade, the increase in prescription drug overdose deaths has mirrored a rise the quantity of medication prescribed. The Task Force is eager to encourage local hospitals implement physician education, adopt proper prescribing guidelines and the mandated use of the Ohio Automated Prescription Reporting System.

This epidemic has exhausted resources available for proper treatment. In order to be successful in reducing lives lost from drug overdose, future funding is essential to increase the number of treatment options and availability.

Prescription drug overdose impacts all residents of Cuyahoga County. By 2018, it is the goal of the Cuyahoga Opiate Task Force to see a 15% reduction in accidental deaths from prescription drug overdose.

Contact

Vince Caraffi, R.S., MPH
Allisyn Leppla, R.S.
Cuyahoga County Board of Health
5550 Venture Dr.
Parma, Ohio 44130
216-201-2000
vcaraffi@ccbh.net
aleppla@ccbh.net
www.ccbh.net
[www.twitter.com/OpiateTaskForce](https://twitter.com/OpiateTaskForce)
www.facebook.com/CuyahogaCountyOpiateTaskForce



Learn more about
Injury & Violence Prevention at:
www.CDC.gov/Injury